



MINUTES
BOARD OF EQUAL RIGHTS COMMISSIONERS
March 20, 2017 at 2:30 P.M. in City Hall, Rm. 303

Present:

Commissioner Jeffery Roman, Chair
Commissioner Sheila Ashley
Commissioner Tony Snell
Commissioner Mayhoua Moua
Sharon Robinson, Dept. of Administration
Jessica Langill, Dept. of Administration
Patricia Ruiz-Cantu, Dept. Of Administration
Ben Roovers, City Attorney's Office
Rebecca Rabatin, DOA Budget & Management
Shelley Gregory, Milwaukee LGBT Community Center

Absent: Commissioner Chez Ordonez

The meeting was called to order at 2:45 p.m. by Commissioner Roman with no quorum.
Quorum effective at 2:51pm.

1. Approval of minutes from February 15, 2017 meeting

Commissioner Ashley moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Moua. No objections, minutes approved unanimously.

2. Community Listening Session Logistics Discussion (Shelley Gregory, LGBT Center)

Commissioner Snell stated that himself, Jessica Langill (DOA), Shelley Gregory (LGBT Center), and Michael Munson (FORGE) had met on President's Day to discuss the logistics for the Community Listening Session. He stated that Jessica would be handling the logistics on the ERC end and Shelley and Michael would be working on the format and running the listening session. Commissioner Snell said that he stepped back from planning so that it was not a Commission-driven listening session.

Shelley Gregory stated that they have reached out to a few community members to speak at the beginning of the session in order to set the tone and encourage others to speak. Shelley stated that they are promoting it as much as possible and that it would be hard to predict how many people will attend. Shelley said they were hoping that the first 10 minutes of the meeting could be for any Commission business and for the Commissioners to introduce themselves. Shelley stated they would then set some

listening guidelines for the group and that each speaker would have a 3 minute limit. There will also be ways for people to write what they want to share instead of having to speak to the group.

Commissioner Snell suggested that a survey be prepared and Ms. Langill stated she would put that together. She also stated that the ERC would be providing refreshments. Commissioner Moua motioned that the ERC provide up to \$50 to be used for refreshments. Commissioner Snell seconded. Commissioner Roman asked if there would be ongoing engagement after the Listening Session. Commissioner Snell brought up the Ordinance Rewrite and mentioned that discussions surrounding that could be used as ongoing engagement.

3. Ordinance Rewrite Update

Ms. Langill stated that Adam Wickersham from LRB provided the committee with an ordinance rewrite draft and that the committee had met to discuss it. She stated the committee had put together changes and additions and that Mr. Wickersham would come back with another draft. Ben Roovers (City Attorney's Office) stated that there had been a discussion about due process. He brought copies of the code of ethics for Milwaukee's ethics committee that would be used to help identify due process for the ERC. Ms. Langill also stated that the committee had discussed potential hate crime legislation that could be put together in the future. Commissioner Snell stated that the committee had talked about broadening the scope of protected classes and the investigation process.

Commissioner Roman asked what the timeline might look like and talked about meeting with Alders. He stated that his first meeting was set for April 3rd with President Hamilton. Commissioner Roman stated that they would need support from members of the Judiciary Committee and that the Commission would need to find authors for the rewrite. Commissioner Roman stated he would like the ordinance to be approved before the budget cycle began, or at least by summer.

Commissioner Ashley asked if the committee could work toward getting everything done for the ordinance rewrite by June so that it could be used in celebration of Pride Month. Commissioner Snell stated that the weekend of PrideFest is also the anniversary of the Orlando Shooting. Commissioner Ashley stated that if the ordinance could be presented at PrideFest that it would give the ERC great momentum and that there is a sense of urgency to get the ordinance done to show Milwaukee's solidarity with the LGBTQ+ communities. Ms. Langill stated that the ERC should be able to present during the opening ceremonies. Commissioner Roman suggested that a public statement be put out about the ordinance and immigration rights after the ordinance is complete. Commissioner Snell stated he would work on the PrideFest end. Ms. Langill stated that

the Ordinance would not be approved by Council before Pride but that the Commission could still talk about the draft and get community support.

Commissioner Snell also stated that the rewrite committee had talked about what the ERC could do if a business that needed a license from the city committed some type of discrimination. He stated that Mr. Wickersham had told them that the ERC could request to testify to the licensing committee or submit a statement about the business that would then be considered next time the business needed to renew their license with the city. Commissioner Snell suggested that the Commission be more proactive. Commissioner Ashley stated that if a company committed a high level of discrimination that the ERC take it on themselves to get the media involved and to really draw attention to the issue.

Commissioner Snell brought up the Milwaukee ID and stated that it could be written into the ordinance rewrite as a protected form of ID and that it could not be refused for discriminatory reasons.

4. ERC Outreach Plan

Commissioner Roman stated he had met with Director Robinson and Ms. Langill last week to discuss a preliminary ERC Outreach Plan. He stated that he wanted the rest of the Commission to be engaged in the process and that he would like any Commissioners who were interested to join in on meetings with the Alders and key organizations. Ms. Robinson stated that the Outreach Plan was drafted to reflect previous outreach discussions from the Commission.

Ms. Langill read through the outreach plan and talked about the list of people and organizations that the ERC should connect with to start building mutually beneficial relationships. Ms. Langill asked that the Commissioners look through the list and provide any contact info they may have that she was not able to find.

Commissioner Moua stated that she would send information to Ms. Langill about the key Hmong/Asian organizations to be added to the list. Commissioner Snell asked that Cecilia Gilbert from Visit Milwaukee's Multicultural Committee. Commissioner Roman stated Milwaukee Pride should be added as well. Commissioner Ashley stated all the Chambers should be added. Ms. Robinson suggested that the Commissioners email Ms. Langill if they thought of any other contacts to be added to the list. Commissioner Moua suggested to add Catholic Charities, Lutheran Social Services and the Pan African org. Commissioner Sheila added AARP, Ms. Rabatin suggested Disability Rights of Wisconsin. Commissioner Snell suggested FORGE and ARCW.

Commissioner Roman stated that the list will be helpful in really starting to engage communities with the ERC and increase visibility as well as to support community organizations. Ms. Robinson stated that since the list is so long that there did not have

to be individual meetings with everyone, but that there could be group meetings or roundtable discussions with multiple orgs/contacts at once. Commissioner Ashley also suggested that Commissioners could attend elected official's neighborhood meetings and talking sessions and be introduced to their constituents.

Ms. Langill talked about the outreach method which would begin with Commissioner Roman being introduced at the cabinet meeting on May 18th. Other outreach methods included attending community events, tabling, 1-on-1 meetings with Council Members, a Black Male Achievement Advisory Council briefing, meeting with State Reps, marketing materials, attend landlord events, get an ERC facebook page, etc. Commissioner Roman reminded everyone to send in an updated bio and picture for the website.

Ms. Langill then talked through the timeline and Commissioner Snell stated that Human Rights Day be added to the timeline and stated the Yearly Report could be presented that day as well. Commissioner Ashley asked if each Commissioner should choose what outreach initiatives they would be responsible for so all the work did not fall on one person. Ms. Langill stated that Commissioner Roman was going to provide a block of time that he would be able to meet with Alders and then once meetings were scheduled she would send the info out to the other Commissioners so they could join in on meetings where they see fit. The Commissioners went through the Council list and stated which meetings they would like to join Commissioner Roman. Ms. Robinson stated that a meeting with the Mayor should be a priority.

Commissioner Snell brought up the HRC's Human Rights Index and stressed the importance of the Ordinance Rewrite and the effect it will have on the city's score. He stated that when meeting with the Mayor and Council Members that this should be discussed. Commissioner Ashley suggested that we add Pathfinders to the organization list as well in order to reach out to the younger population.

Commissioner Snell suggested that we put together a Google Docs so that Commissioners could just add their contacts directly to the document. Ms. Langill stated she would put that together. Ms. Langill went through the timeline for the outreach plan. She stated she would be putting together a one-page list of talking points for Commissioners to use when meeting with Alders and other internal contacts. The Commissioners discussed the outreach timeline and made some additions/changes. Commissioner Roman brought up hosting a city Commission meet-and-greet to get all the Commissioners together to build relationships and look for potential ways to partner.

5. Community Dialogue / Events

Patricia Ruiz-Cantu talked about the Know Your Rights event focused on immigration that the ERC and the city is sponsoring. She stated that it will be held at the Mexican Consulate. Since the event was going to be in Spanish, Commissioner Snell stated he would be able to go to represent the ERC and would be willing to say a little about the ERC. Ms. Ruiz-Cantu talked about the fears in the immigrant community including fear of being stopped while driving and losing their children if the parents are deported. She stated that ICE did not have the right to go into homes or remove people without an order. She also stated that the city is celebrating Cesar Chavez Day on March 31st, and that the ERC would be providing a cake for the event at city hall.

Commissioner Snell stated that the Milwaukee LGBT Community was hosting a community meet and greet for all elected and appointed Wisconsin LGBTQ+ officials. He stated this would also be the beginning of a partnership between the officials and LGBTQ+ organizations. Commissioner Snell also stated he would like the ERC to reach out to the Jewish community in response to the threats. Commissioner Roman stated that we should add the Milwaukee Jewish Federation and Milwaukee Jewish Council to the outreach plan. Commissioner Roman asked Ms. Langill to add a calendar to the ERC website.

Commissioner Moua stated that her organization will no longer be tabling at the Hmong Conference so the ERC can find another Hmong event to be involved in in the future. Commissioner Ashley stated the League of Progressive Seniors Medical Care March would be happening at the Federal Court House on March 22nd at 10:30am. The group will be asking Senator Ron Johnson to host a town hall to discuss the changes being proposed to Medicare, Medicaid and Obama Care. Ms. Ruiz-Cantu said there was a state budget hearing at the Washington Center this evening.

6. Next Meeting is Wednesday, May 17th at 2:30pm

7. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

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jml